



Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging

# Aging Washington

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## Case Management Profile: Margie Hall & Peggy Graybill

*These are stories about real people who are in the care of Case Managers in the Area Agency on Aging in-home care system in Washington State, and how they've benefited from being able to live in their own homes while dealing with their disabilities.*

### **"As Long as You Don't Put Me in a Nursing Home"**

Margie Hall's plan is to walk again one day. Plagued by debilitating osteoporosis, battling cancer and suffering from severe anemia, Margie doesn't have an easy goal. But with the help of Peggy Graybill of King County Aging and Disability Services (the King County AAA), she is on her way.

Peggy isn't the person who takes Margie to the doctor, helps her get dressed, feeds her, runs errands and helps with medication; she is Margie's case manager, the person who makes sure that all of these needs are taken care of. As a case manager, Peggy's job is to assess how much care a client needs and help her find treatment options that work for her. Case management services help disabled seniors get help without being put into an institution, allowing them to stay at home where they are comfortable and happy and yet still have their health needs cared for.

Last week Margie called Peggy, concerned about a new wrinkle in her health care. The two have been working together for four years now, and Margie's condition has changed several times in the last few years. Peggy comes to Margie's home periodically to re-assess her needs and refer her to the appropriate people for her treatments. This time, Margie's anemia has caused her to need to visit the hospital weekly for IV drips, thus creating the need for her caregiver to spend more hours with her.

"Peggy's great about coming to see me and talking to me," Margie says. The two crack jokes with Margie's caregiver, who was assigned to help Margie two years ago. They discuss Margie's health, her treatments and her well-being openly. "Just as long as you don't put me in a nursing home!" Margie half-jokes. Her walls are lined with the dream catchers that her daughter has made for her, and photos of her grandchildren. An institution just wouldn't be home for Margie.

Helping older and disabled adults stay at home is a priority for case managers. It is proven that people will live healthier, happier lives if they can remain where they feel the most comfortable: in their homes, around their families and communities. To achieve this, the case manager assesses and documents client needs, treatments, diagnoses, cognitive performance, and then provides options for services. Once the client has this information, she can make informed choices about her care. As the years go by, Peggy updates Margie on her care and her different options. And each time, Margie chooses her own home.

Through all of this, Margie has continued – and will continue, despite her disabilities – to live her life. And hopefully, with the help of Peggy and her caretaker, learn to walk again.

*For more information, call the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) at 360-570-2239, or email at [w4a@olywa.net](mailto:w4a@olywa.net).*

*There's no place like home*